

Table 1 – need denominator for the ASMR – it is /100,000 population?

Table 1 – suggest reporting the latest AAPC in Table 1 (and noting it as such in the column, rather than the first one. It would also help to put the time period in the column as well, rather than having to rely on the footnotes.

Figure 1- the scale and meaning of the y-axis in Figure 1A is not clear. Given the rest of the paper reports joinpoint trend results, it is not clear why the smoothed trends are also reported. I would suggest that there is too many degrees of freedom in the smoothed curves – they seem to follow the data points more or less exactly.

Figure 1 – there is a typographical error in the last line of the footnote.

Figure 2 – please make clear on the Figure which graphs are for which country (ie. Not just in the footnotes).

Figure 2 – please ensure that the y-axis scales are the same across the four countries for each subgroup. For example currently for Gender, 3 countries go from 1.0 – 1.6, and one goes from 1.0-1.4.

What are the “relative effects” – does this correspond to the mortality rate ratio? If so, please clarify throughout the manuscript.

Using the 0-29 year age group (which has the smallest numbers of deaths) for the mortality rate ratio calculations is not advisable.

Figure 3 should be on a relative y-axis scale, and include $y=1$ in the figure.

Figure 3 duplicates what is shown in Figure 2, and should be deleted.

Line 250 – how were the mortality rate ratios compared?